

The Christian martyr movement of 850s Córdoba has received considerable scholarly attention over the decades, yet the movement has often been seen as anomalous. The martyrs' apologists were responsible for a huge spike in evidence, but analysis of their work has shown that they likely represented a minority "rigorist" position within the Christian community and reacted against the increasing accommodation of many Mozarabic Christians to the realities of Muslim rule. This article seeks to place the apologists, and therefore the martyrs, in a longer-term perspective by demonstrating that martyr memories were cultivated in the city and surrounding region throughout late antiquity, from at least the late fourth century. The Cordoban apologists made active use of this tradition in their presentation of the events of the mid-ninth century. The article closes by suggesting that the martyr movement of the 850s drew strength from churches dedicated to earlier martyrs from the city and that the memories of the martyrs of the mid-ninth century were used to reinforce communal bonds at Córdoba and beyond in the following years. Memories and memorials of martyrdom were thus powerful means of forging connections across time and space in early medieval Iberia.

#### Keywords

Hagiography / Iberia,

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Violence,

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Visigoths (Iberian kingdom) – hagiography

In the year 549, Agila (d. 554), king of the Visigoths, took it upon himself to bring the city of Córdoba under his power. The expedition appears to have been an utter disaster and its failure was attributed by Isidore of Seville (d. 636) to the intervention of the saints. Apparently, they punished Agila for having profaned the church of St Aciscus, a martyr from the persecution of the early fourth century.<sup>1</sup>

Moving against the city of Córdoba in battle, Agila, in contempt of the Catholic religion, inflicted injury on the church of the most blessed martyr, Acisclus. At the outset of his struggle against the citizens of Córdoba, this profane man polluted the sacred site of Acisclus' tomb with the remains of his enemies and their horses. He thus deserved the punishments unleashed by the saints. Struck in vengeance in the middle of the same campaign, he lost both his son, who was killed there along with a large part of the army, and his remarkably rich treasury. [Iste aduersus Cordubensem urbem proelio mouens dum in contemptu catholicae religionis ecclesiae beatissimi martyris Aciscli iniuriam inferret hostiumque ac iumentorum horrore sacrum sepulchri eius locum ut profanator pollueret, inito aduersus Cordubensis cuius certamine poenas dignas sanctis inferentibus meruit. Nam belli praesentis ultione percussus et filium ibi cum copia exercitus interfectum amisit et thesaurum omnem cum insignibus opibus perdidit.]<sup>2</sup>

Acisclus was by no means the only martyr who was memorialised in Córdoba in the course of late antiquity and such memorials provided powerful foci for civic identity in the city, as they did elsewhere in the late antique and early medieval Mediterranean. The basilica of St Acisclus retained its position as one of the main churches of Córdoba in the early medieval period, even after the establishment of the city as capital of the Muslim state of Al-Andalus. This status emerges clearly in literature associated with a series of martyrdoms of Christians which took place at the hands of the Muslim authorities during the 850s. According to the main contemporary sources for the martyrs, Paulus Albarus (probably d. 860s) and Eulogius (d. 859), these events were the end of a long process of persecution of Christians by Muslims.<sup>3</sup>

The "persecution" operated across religious, cultural and economic areas of life within the city and its surrounding areas and the combined effect was, according to Albarus and Eulogius, to make it impossible for Christians to follow their religion unhindered. On this presentation of events, Christian rigorists had no choice but to confront the Islamic authorities and, in the process, to voluntarily open themselves to the possibility of martyrdom.<sup>4</sup>

Eulogius, a priest from an elite family, was a staunch defender of those executed by the Muslim authorities in the 850s.<sup>5</sup>

His works included: the *Memoriale sanctorum*, which was written to commemorate the lives and deeds of the martyrs; the *Documentum martyriale*, which was dedicated to Flora and Maria, future martyrs whom Eulogius met when he was imprisoned in the early 850s; and the *Apologeticum martyrum*, which was intended to disprove those who doubted the status of the martyrs by linking them to the martyrs of the earliest Church. Eulogius was martyred in 859 after being discovered harbouring a Muslim girl who had converted to Christianity.<sup>6</sup>

Paul Albarus, a school friend of Eulogius, was also strident in his defence of the martyrs, writing the *Indiculus luminosus* in 854 in response to those who questioned the status of the voluntary martyrs. Albarus argued that it was the time of the Antichrist foretold in scripture, days of tribulation and persecution. Those who offered themselves for execution were therefore not doing so according to their own will, but fulfilling a prophecy. Albarus later wrote the *Vita Eulogii* to demonstrate Eulogius's status as a martyr.<sup>7</sup>

Samson was abbot of the Basilica of St Zoilus in Córdoba, where Eulogius had served as priest and was buried. His *Apologeticus* of 864 focused on the post-martyr situation and indicates the continued existence of two opposing groups within the Christian community after the end of the martyrdoms. Samson presented his opponents as carrying out a persecution of the Church on the orders of the Muslim government. The apologists were all well-educated and deeply concerned with the fate of Christian Córdoba. They perceived a threat to Christian culture, society and religion from

the influence of Islam and Arabic learning and were bitterly opposed to any Christians who wished to compromise with Islam.

There has been considerable debate about the relationship between the martyrs and their apologists and the rest of the Christian community. Some scholars have argued that they were an “extremist” minority that was unrepresentative of the Christian community as a whole, while others contend that they were much more typical of the group as a whole.<sup>8</sup>

In recent decades there has been an increasing focus on the extent to which their actions were a response to changing social and religious conditions, such as increased conversion to Islam.<sup>9</sup>

Research over the past thirty years has brought into question reductive identity distinctions that draw clear differences between Mozarabic Latin-speaking Christians and Arabic-speaking Muslims. “Mozarabic” identity is now understood to be the result of a complex fusion of social, cultural, religious and linguistic features that varied according to time and place.<sup>10</sup>

For example, despite their hostility to Arab culture and the Islamic religion, Albarus and Eulogius transliterated Arabic words, and Samson was called on for assistance by the king on account of his language skills, while all of the apologists demonstrated knowledge of the Qur'an and Islamic law.<sup>11</sup>

The writings of the apologists are therefore strong evidence for quite deep cultural contact between Christians and Muslims, despite the fact that they argue so staunchly for greater separation between the faiths.

Whatever their actual – as opposed to rhetorical – engagement with Muslims, the apologists used their knowledge of Christian scripture, theology and history, and especially the memories of earlier martyrs, as part of their campaign to limit Arab-Muslim cultural and religious influence and restrict

those Christians who wanted to adopt a less oppositional attitude towards the Muslims. The voluntary martyrs of 850s Córdoba were thus presented as the true inheritors of the early Christian martyrs, defending the Church from persecution from without and laxity from within. Yet the accounts of Eulogius and Albarus were designed to construct a particular image of the situation in Córdoba in the 850s as a true persecution that resulted in legitimate martyrdoms.<sup>12</sup>

Ann Christys has demonstrated that a number of Eulogius's martyrs did not come from Córdoba and their temporal "spread" may have been similarly broad. On this interpretation, Eulogius worked to construct a coherent movement out of what may have been a number of separate episodes that were geographically and chronologically quite dispersed.<sup>13</sup>

Drawing on this and similar work on the construction of the martyrs, this article contextualises the "movement" by demonstrating that it formed part of longstanding processes of martyr memorialisation in Córdoba. The early Christian martyrs had been memorialised in the city since the late fourth century at the earliest and continued to be cultivated actively during late antiquity and the early medieval period through the construction of cult sites, the raising of inscriptions, liturgical performance and literary production. The effort of the apologists for the voluntary martyrs of the 850s to rally their section of the Christian community of Córdoba was by no means unique. In an environment that was littered with memorials to the martyrs, the apologists turned to identity markers forged during earlier persecutions to legitimate their opposition to enemies within their faith and to outsiders by presenting the figures about whom they wrote as true inheritors of the early martyrs.

Memories and memorials of martyrdom in late antique and Visigothic Córdoba

Scholars have long recognised the important role that narratives of martyrdom and suffering played in the construction and maintenance of Christian identities and communities from their earliest days. Martyrdoms took place in public and both Christian and non-Christian authors report that the steadfastness of the martyrs often made a strong impression on the audience, both at the time and, even more importantly, later on in narrative form as *passiones*.<sup>14</sup>

The production and later circulation of accounts of the deeds and deaths of martyrs seem to have been designed to have a similarly positive impact. But it was not just the *acta* that publicised the excellence of the martyrs. In late antiquity and throughout the middle ages, letters, chronicles and many other texts deployed the memories of martyrs to create a shared sense of Christian community across time and space.<sup>15</sup>

Yet the persecutions and resulting martyrdoms were to some extent a literary construction of talented Christian writers such as Tertullian and Cyprian in late-second- and third-century North Africa. They were not intended to reflect accurately the everyday realities of living within a Christian community under the pre-Constantinian Roman Empire. Memories of persecution and martyrdom were crafted carefully to promote a particular vision of the Christian community, its leaders and their relations with other religions, society as a whole and the Roman state. Nor should we imagine that members of the Christian group and its leaders were united in their vision of the community: large numbers of Christians were willing to compromise and authors such as Tertullian and Cyprian wrote in order to create an image of these people as deviant and even heretical.<sup>16</sup>

After the conversion of Constantine in the early fourth century, competing Christian groups based claims to legitimacy on their direct inheritance not just of the early Church but also of its martyrs. Competition over the memory of early Christian martyrs has been described as “the kinetic energy powering Christian life in Africa”, for example.<sup>17</sup>

Even after the triumph of Nicene orthodoxy at the end of the fourth century, bishops and their congregations invested heavily in the cult of the saints and often competed to outdo one another in the magnificence of their devotion to the martyrs of the early Church.<sup>18</sup>

The cult of the saints was as well embedded in late- and post-Roman Iberia as it was elsewhere in the late-antique Mediterranean.<sup>19</sup>

Martyr acts and hagiographies were read, copied and reused, and cult sites were developed across the peninsula. Sometimes these processes were the result of competition between cities or political powers within Iberia. In other instances they were caused by conflict with outsiders. On other occasions, attempts to cultivate the memories of saints stirred up hostility to those belonging to other religions.<sup>20</sup>

The “impulse to claim an illustrious ancestry” seems to have been a consistent feature of Christian attempts to assert communal identity throughout late antiquity, although it may have strengthened in Iberia during the Visigothic period of the late sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>21</sup>

Archaeological and textual evidence suggests that a range of martyr cults was being cultivated in Córdoba from the fourth century onwards.<sup>22</sup>

There is also an emphasis on martyrs from Córdoba in cult-associated inscriptions from across the province of Baetica, of which the city had traditionally been the capital.<sup>23</sup>

Writing in the late fourth and early fifth century, the Christian poet Prudentius notes that cults were being promoted actively in Córdoba: “Corduba will give Acisclus and Zoilus and her three crowns [= Faustus, Januarius and Martialis]” [Corduba Acisclum dabit et Zoellum, tresque coronas].<sup>24</sup>

These five martyrs were the predominant saints within the city throughout the period. By the sixth century, written sources suggest that basilicas in the city had been dedicated to Acisclus, the “three crowns”, Felix and Vincent, although it has not been possible to locate securely through excavation any of the fifth- to seventh-century martyr churches within the city and it seems increasingly likely that the churches which survived into the Umayyad period were located in suburban areas (i.e. outside the old city walls).<sup>25</sup>

By the Visigothic period of the sixth and seventh centuries, there were several churches dedicated to martyrs in Córdoba, including the cathedral church of St Vincent, and it is likely that St Acisclus was at this time considered to be patron saint of the city.<sup>26</sup>

Probably as a result of the historical and strategic significance of Córdoba, the Visigothic kings intervened actively there, including in the city's martyr cults. King Agila, as noted above, seems to have targeted the church of St Acisclus deliberately as part of his campaign against Córdoba and, according to Isidore, the saints took their collective revenge on the king and his army soon afterwards.<sup>27</sup>



We know too that in the early seventh century, King Sisebut (d. 621) had the relics of St Zoilus transferred to the church of St Felix.<sup>28</sup>

The martyr churches seem to have occupied points of strategic as well as spiritual importance within the city. An eleventh-century Arabic source called the *Akhbār majmū'a* reports that Visigothic forces sheltered and were subsequently besieged in the church of St Acisclus during the conquest of the city by Muslim forces in the early eighth century.<sup>29</sup>

As elsewhere in the post-Roman Mediterranean and in other Spanish cities, Córdoba's bishops promoted the city's martyr cults. Relics of Acisclus, Zoilus, Faustus, Januarius and Martialis were deposited in churches in Córdoba across the province of Baetica due to the sponsorship of local bishops.<sup>30</sup>

An inscribed list of martyr relics from the city of Córdoba includes the same five martyrs, while an inscription dated to 638 refers to an altar with relics of the Cordoban brothers and martyrs (probably Faustus, Januarius and Martialis).<sup>31</sup>

Handley notes that the “the role of martyrs as patrons, intercessors and healers was [...] little challenged in early medieval” Iberia and that recent saints such as bishops and monks were not the subject of cult in Iberia, unlike the rest of the late antique and early medieval West.<sup>32</sup>

The historical prestige and, presumably, the contemporary efficacy of martyr saints as intercessors thus established their pre-eminence within Iberia. For example, the inventio (discovery) of the relics of St Zoilus is recorded in the saint's passio (dated to the late eighth or early ninth century) as having taken place under the direction of Bishop Agapius in the early seventh century.<sup>33</sup>

The perceived ability of relics to prompt saintly intervention in the present world is made plain in the account of Agapius's discovery of Zoilus's body. According to the passio, after the saint's body was revealed to him, the bishop repeatedly kissed the relics. The result was that Agapius's teeth fell out and he was reprimanded by the saint the following night.<sup>34</sup>

During the Visigothic and post-Visigothic period, the martyrs of Roman Córdoba, including those originally mentioned by Prudentius, were thus commemorated in churches and through the circulation of relics within the city and across Baetica under the sponsorship of local bishops and sometimes with royal backing.

Liturgical as well as literary efforts were made to secure the goodwill of the Cordoban saints.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to the passio of Zoilus, accounts were written between the late eighth and tenth centuries of the martyrdoms of Acisclus and Victoria<sup>36</sup>

and of Faustus, Januarius and Martialis (the “three crowns”).<sup>37</sup>

The veneration of martyrs connected the city's Christian community to its distant past, ensuring patronage and protection in the present and future and, as we have just seen, intercession when it was asked for. It is important to note that much of the earliest liturgical evidence is either later than the 850s or cannot be associated securely with Córdoba. Better evidence for liturgical celebration prior to the 850s is a late seventh- or eighth-century manuscript known as the "Verona Codex", which records the liturgy of the church at Tarragona and in which Acisclus is included alongside a number of other martyrs.<sup>38</sup>

The ninth-century Frankish writer Walafrid Strabo records in a chapter of a text on ecclesiastical usages that Bishop Gregory of Córdoba was praised in a council of bishops by Emperor Theodosius I (d. 395) for commemorating many martyrs' names when he celebrated mass.<sup>39</sup>

Although this is a late source and we have no way of knowing whether Cordoban saints were included among those mentioned by Gregory, this does point further towards the interest of the city's bishops in liturgical martyr commemoration, or at least that later sources thought that this was the kind of thing that they would have done. Passionaries, calendars and other passing references thus provide strong evidence for the commemoration of Cordoban saints in the late ninth and tenth centuries, even if they cannot be securely associated with their home city or with earlier periods.

#### Making martyrs through historical examples in ninth-century Córdoba

The martyrs of Roman Córdoba were thus a "live" presence on the streets of the early medieval city and Christians engaged actively with their physical remains and their memories. This long-term commemorative tradition can better enable us to understand the historical exempla that were deployed in the apologetical writings of the 850s to establish the legitimacy of the martyrs and as a

means of instruction. The Cordoban apologists of the 850s saw it as their duty to educate others in the Christian faith and one of the main methods by which they sought to do so was through the use of martyrs as examples to be emulated and reflected on.<sup>40</sup>

Albarus, for example, noted that he recorded the passion of Eulogius so that it could be recited at the annual festival that was held in Eulogius's honour, presumably in order to act as an inspiration to others.<sup>41</sup>

Eulogius's *Memoriale sanctorum* is replete with references to martyrs from elsewhere in Iberia and the rest of the early Christian world, from Felix of Gerona to Babylas of Antioch.<sup>42</sup>

His intention here seems to have been to inspire the potential martyrs of Córdoba in the 850s with the examples of their illustrious forebears and to position the city alongside other illustrious sees within and beyond Iberia, in the same way as earlier writers of martyr narratives had done.<sup>43</sup>

Albarus's portrayal of Eulogius as a martyr in the *Vita Eulogii* rested at least in part on the presentation of his subject as an exemplary teacher of Christian traditions to the other martyrs. This, by the 850s, was a martyrological commonplace.<sup>44</sup>

The use of such a long-established trope was part of Albarus's efforts to demonstrate that Eulogius was a true martyr and thus that the movement as a whole was a legitimate response to persecution. Albarus makes clear that Eulogius's request for intercession from the martyrs was granted because he lived an exemplary life: "And those things which he had asked with tears of the martyrs, and which he had scattered as a prayer through all his writings, he won by his life of holiness" [et ea que a martiribus fuis postulauerat lacrimis et per tota sua opuscula more sparserat precis obtinere meruit operibus sanctitatis].<sup>45</sup>

Elsewhere, Eulogius is presented as much more active in motivating prospective martyrs to action and bolstering their spirits:

for the holy virgins Flora and Mary, imprisoned for their faith, he wrote his *Documentum martyriale* in one book, in which with strong encouragement he fortified them for martyrdom, and both in person and by correspondence taught them to despise death [...]. [sanctis uirginibus Florie et Marie pro fide comprehensis illud *Documentum Martiriale* uno libro conposuit in quo eas ad martirium neruis tenacissimi solidabit easque et per se uerbis et per epistolis mortem contemere docuit [...]]<sup>46</sup>

The apologists' attempts to reconfigure views of interfaith relationships in the present were grounded in the promotion of a particular view of the past. One of the key texts for the campaign to delegitimise Christian and Muslim "oppressors" was the so-called *Istoria de Mahomet*, a highly polemical biography of Muhammad and one of the earliest Latin works on the Prophet's life.<sup>47</sup>

Eulogius claimed that he had acquired it from the monastery of Leire on a journey to the north of Iberia, possibly in 848, although recent research has suggested that he spliced the account he had copied in the north with information garnered from the monk George, who came to Córdoba from the monastery of Mar Saba in Jerusalem and was later martyred.<sup>48</sup>

Eulogius included the *Istoria* in his *Liber apologeticus martyrum* and used it to rebut the arguments of the Christians who counselled toleration towards the Muslims by showing that Islam was a false prophecy and a perversion of Christian doctrine.<sup>49</sup>

Christys has argued that, in the north, Eulogius secured a number of additional martyr narratives with which to flesh out the catalogue that he was in the process of putting together and which would eventually become the *Memoriale sanctorum*.<sup>50</sup>

Travelling to the north thus provided Eulogius with access to historical materials that, combined with those already at his disposal in Córdoba, opened up new polemical avenues, better enabling him to construct an image of the Christian community in Córdoba as undergoing persecution at the hands of an oppressive government that worshipped an illegitimate prophet.

The apologists' depiction of the situation in Córdoba in the mid-ninth century was carefully crafted to present a violent image of Christian–Muslim conflict in the past. It also seems to have been the result of their engagement with literature about martyrdom and persecution in the early Church, including the Bible.<sup>51</sup>

For example, at the end of the *Vita Eulogii*, Albarus suggests that martyrs buttress the Church and the faithful through their steadfast example:

Now [...] it remains to give thanks to the King of ages who from the beginning of the faith has adorned his church with martyrs, has given strength to the weary, and has brought to eternal glory those who put no trust in themselves. [Nunc restat [...] Regi omnium seculorum gratias agree, qui ab initio fidei suam ornans martiribus ecclesiam dat lassis uirtutem et de se nihil presumptibus perducit ad gloriam sempiternam.]<sup>52</sup>

The payoff for those who were willing to martyr themselves was considerable. After describing the opposition that faced Eulogius when he was elected bishop of Toledo in 852, which meant that he was unable to take up the position, Albarus says that martyrdom moved him onto a higher spiritual plane entirely: “he secured a heavenly episcopate when he was joined to Christ through the glory of martyrdom” [episcopatum celestem adeptus est dum per martirii gloria Christo coniunctus est].<sup>53</sup>

Martyrdom positioned Eulogius, and presumably the other martyrs of the 850s, alongside Christ.

The apologists also sought to pattern the recent Cordoban martyrs on earlier saints. For example, Albarus and Eulogius both presented a number of the martyrs as developing reputations for ascetic excellence earlier in their lives.<sup>54</sup>

In so doing, they bought into a hagiographical commonplace that had been present in apologetic literature and martyr narratives since at least the second century: martyr saints were highly-trained ascetic experts who were more than able to withstand the worldly blandishments and violent punishments of their persecutors.<sup>55</sup>

Earlier Christian writers on martyrdom further influenced the apologists’ presentation of the martyrs of the 850s. Prudentius, for example, was an important model on thematic and structural grounds.<sup>56</sup>

Eulogius's accounts in the *Memoriale sanctorum* of the unwillingness of young women to give up their Christian faith and resulting flight from the family home can be paralleled with Prudentius's narrative of the passion of Eulalia, a young Spanish female martyr whose passion is usually dated to the Diocletianic persecution of the early fourth century.<sup>57</sup>

Further echoes of Prudentius can be seen at a number of key moments in the martyr narrative collected in the *Memoriale sanctorum*, including: the defiant attitudes of the martyrs towards the judge; the entry into prison; the physical punishments and torture endured by the martyrs; the martyr's moment of death; the prize or crown of the martyr; and the use negative labelling to mark out those holding positions contrary to that of either the martyr or the author.<sup>58</sup>

Prudentius's accounts of the martyrs of the third and fourth centuries provided Eulogius with a powerful set of models that he was able to adapt in order to demonstrate that the martyrs of the 850s were legitimate. Similar processes of creative engagement with Prudentius's martyr narratives have been observed in the seventh-century Spanish redaction of the *passio* of Vincent, which was written to conform to contemporary religious norms rather than to the earlier stories of Prudentius or Augustine.<sup>59</sup>

The apologists cited the Bible freely in their writings and both the Old and New Testaments provided examples to justify the conduct of the martyrs as legitimate resistance to persecution.<sup>60</sup>

For example, in response to the judge's accusation that he was drunk, Isaac, the second martyr and the first in a series of executions across the summer of 851, replied by quoting the well-known passage from the Beatitudes: "Blessed are those that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for



theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:10) [Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam, quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum].<sup>61</sup>

The apologists made liberal use of other books of the Bible to demonstrate the falseness of the Muslims, to berate Christian opponents and as a means of demonstrating the legitimacy of the martyrs.<sup>62</sup>

The apologists' conception of present Muslim–Christian relations was thus filtered through a specific historical understanding of the centrality of martyrdom and persecution in the history of the Church. From the earliest history of the Church, martyrs had protected the faithful and as a reward they were granted a special place in heaven, and the apologists of the 850s claimed a similar status for their martyrs.

#### Martyrs, monuments and memorialisation in the 850s

In addition to the skilled use of historical exemplars to establish the legitimacy of the Córdoba martyrs, Albarus and Eulogius sought to inscribe the memory of their deeds and deaths on the collective consciousness of Christian Córdoba through a combination of textual production and physical commemoration. The apologists imagined that their martyr narratives would function as eternal memorials, while the remains of the holy dead were collected and venerated in long-established martyr basilicas and more recent monastic foundations in the suburbs of the city. These efforts at memorialisation seem to have taken place in a context of gradual urban transformation within Córdoba in the ninth and tenth centuries.<sup>63</sup>

One major change to the religious topography of the Visigothic city was the demolition of the cathedral church of St Vincent and its replacement with a new mosque under the orders of 'Abd al-Raḥmān I (d. 785) towards the end of the eighth century, although the Christians were given permission to build other churches outside the city walls. The area for worship within the mosque was extended under 'Abd al-Raḥmān II in the mid-ninth century.<sup>64</sup>

One of the measures taken by Muḥammad I in order to curtail the martyr movement after he became emir in 852 was to order the destruction of new churches and the removal of any ornamentation that had been added to old pre-conquest churches.<sup>65</sup>

Molenat's analysis of the written evidence has demonstrated that, although there is evidence for suburban and rural churches away from the city, no churches can be located with certainty within the old city walls of Umayyad Córdoba from the eighth to the tenth century.<sup>66</sup>

Church building and restoration only appear to have been tolerated at a distance from Muslim residential areas and, especially, Islamic sites of worship, a division that was reinforced by legal rulings.<sup>67</sup>

The sparse epigraphic evidence for the Mozarabic community in Córdoba, limited almost entirely to funerary inscriptions, provides no evidence for church construction in the ninth and tenth centuries either.<sup>68</sup>

Córdoba's churches thus seem to have been sites at which Muslim dominance could, especially in times of intercommunal stress such as the 850s, be asserted over the religious lives of the Christian population of the city and, indeed, the very lack of evidence for basilicas in the city indicates the gradual de-Christianisation of urban space in Córdoba.

The city's suburban monasteries provided a large proportion of the martyrs – around half of them had spent some time in such communities. It is not surprising, therefore, that the monasteries played an important role in the commemorative process.<sup>69</sup>

For example, remains of the martyrs Aurelius and George, whose deeds and deaths were recorded together by Eulogius along with Felix, Liliusa and Sabigotho, ended up at the monastery of Pinna Mellaria.<sup>70</sup>

Yet, although the authorities tried to forbid the collection of the remains of martyrs and their subsequent veneration, relics of the martyrs were deposited at established martyr basilicas more frequently than at other locations, even the monasteries.<sup>71</sup>

These basilicas were dedicated to earlier martyrs and were foci for the education of a number of the key members of the movement and, later on, for their commemoration. As noted above, Eulogius was priest of St Zoilus, with which Samson was associated before he became abbot of Pinna Mellaria. Perfectus, the first martyr on Eulogius's list was priest at the basilica of St Acisclus, while the martyr Sisenandus came to Córdoba specifically to study there.<sup>72</sup>

Anastasius had been educated at St Acisclus, too, before he became a deacon and took up the monastic life.<sup>73</sup>

Emilia and Jeremiah were educated in the basilica of St Cyprian from infancy.<sup>74</sup>

Passing references to the martyr churches also indicate their centrality as landmarks for the Christian community, or at least that part of it from which the martyrs derived. For example, the martyrs Maria and Flora met up at St Acisclus before going to the judge's court to denounce Muḥammad.<sup>75</sup>

Importantly, the remains of many of the martyrs of the 850s were actually interred in the basilicas of their predecessors.<sup>76</sup>

Albarus reports that, at the same time as inspiring the martyrs to action, Eulogius busied himself with venerating and preserving their bodies.<sup>77</sup>

Remains of Felix, Sabigotho and Liliosa were deposited in the martyr churches of St Christopher (across the river to the south of the city), the three saints (presumably the “three crowns”), and St Genesius (in a suburb called Terzos), respectively.<sup>78</sup>

The bodies of Gumesindus and Servus Dei were secretly taken away by the Christians and interred with religious cult in St Christopher's too.<sup>79</sup>

The heads of Flora and Maria were deposited in the basilica of St Acisclus, as were the bodies of Sisenandus and Perfectus.<sup>80</sup>

Eulogius, Leovigild and Christopher were buried in the church of St Zoilus, while Leocritia, like Liliusa, was interred in the basilica of St Genesis.<sup>81</sup>

The case of the monk Argimirus is perhaps the most interesting. Eulogius reports that his body was saved by a religious from the basilica of St Acisclus and then interred following a service next to the tombs of St Acisclus and St Perfectus (the first martyr recorded by Eulogius).<sup>82</sup>

Acisclus thus occupied a central position within the basilica and it was around this hub that subsequent martyrial tombs of the 850s were situated, creating a martyrial repertoire with both historical depth and contemporary resonance. Similar processes were going on at churches elsewhere in the city and its outskirts, tying together the martyrs of the distant past, those of the immediate present and the communities that venerated their relics and worshipped at their tombs.

The composition of texts about martyrs was, according to the apologists, akin to the construction of a physical memorial. Albarus stated explicitly that both he and Eulogius wrote about the martyrdoms in order to preserve the memories of those who had died for the faith. Albarus reports that Eulogius's intention in cataloguing the deeds and deaths of the martyrs as a group was to create a record for the future.<sup>83</sup>

In these books he described in a distinguished style the passion of each martyr, and with considerable fullness he published for future generations all that was done and said in the case of the martyrs of God. [...] in quibus libris et passiones singillatim martyrum claro fonte locutionis explicuit et prosecutione sufficienti quaeque acta sunt in martiribus Dei et dicta secuturis generationibus propalauit.]<sup>84</sup>

Albarus's biography of Eulogius was written for an identical reason: so that his memory would live on forever on earth, and he waxes lyrical about the enduring nature of the monument that he had built to Eulogius.<sup>85</sup>

Literary and physical memorialisation of the martyrs of Córdoba, old and new, served the same purpose: to renew the relationship of the Christian community – or that part of it with which Albarus and Eulogius agreed – with the saints. The aim here was to persuade the martyrs to intercede. This can be seen most clearly in Albarus's direct requests to Eulogius for intercession in the *Vita Eulogii*:

And so, great martyr of God bearing the sweet name of Eulogius, hear your Albarus calling to you; and as here on earth you held me fast in your heart with love, so make me your servant in heaven. I shall urge you no words but your own as intercession. [Ergo martir Dei exelse, dulcis nomen, Eulogie, Albarum tuum clamantem intende, et quem hic tenuisti caritate animo fixum, illic tibi adsocia seruum. Non aliorum quam tuis te interueniam uerbis.]<sup>86</sup>

The desire to secure intercession through memorialisation operated at a level that was not solely individual. Eulogius makes clear that there was a communal focus too. The *Memoriale sanctorum*

states that, although the work was designed originally for a group of monks to fortify them in their resistance, it was finally dedicated to all of the churches so that they might be victorious in their struggles.<sup>87</sup>

The letter Eulogius wrote to Bishop Willesindus of Pamplona offers a brief narrative of the circumstances surrounding the “persecution” and early martyrdoms. The stated purpose of this narrative – to illustrate the tribulations of the Christian community in Córdoba for future generations – further demonstrates the importance of the eternal memorialisation of these new martyr saints and the group which claimed their memory at Córdoba.<sup>88</sup>

#### Apologetics, relics and the cultivation of martyr networks beyond Al-Andalus

The Christian community in Córdoba maintained contacts with fellow religionists elsewhere in Iberia and even to the north of the Pyrenees. Eulogius reports, for example, that the martyr Felix had been to the Asturias and learnt about Catholic monasticism.<sup>89</sup>

Carolingian sources of the mid-ninth century also point towards diplomatic contact and the regular flow of information between various Iberian groups – northern Christian powers, Mozarabs and Muslim rulers – and Francia.<sup>90</sup>

Political boundaries between Francia and Al-Andalus were extremely fluid. This is well illustrated by an event that took place in 837 when an Alemannic deacon called Bodo is reported to have converted from Christianity to Judaism following disputation with some Jews. He then let his beard grow, was circumcised and adopted the name Eleazar. He entered Zaragoza later that year and eventually gained a position at the court at Córdoba. There he engaged in religious disputations with Albarus in the 840s. There are references later in the 840s to Bodo-Eleazar's efforts to oppress the Christians of Córdoba, some of whom sent a petition to Francia requesting that the emperor demand an end to the "persecution".<sup>91</sup>

The borders between Al-Andalus and Francia were by no means closed, nor does religion seem to have been a factor impeding communication and exchange.

Frankish interest in Córdoba continued after the end of the martyr movement. In 858, for example, two Frankish monks on a journey to Valencia to try to obtain relics of the martyr Vincent diverted to Córdoba when they heard of the martyrdoms, eventually acquiring the relics of Aurelius, George and Sabigotho. These events were recorded by the monks from the monastery of St-Germain des-Prés, who sought to develop the cult of the martyrs as a means of securing royal patronage (without much success, it turned out).<sup>92</sup>

Around a century after the end of the martyr movement in Córdoba, in 953/4, an embassy from the east Frankish King Otto (r. 936–973) visited the city under the leadership of the monk John of Gorze. The episode was recorded by Abbot John of the monastery of St Arnulf's in Metz in the *Vita* of John of Gorze, which was probably written in 983. The narrative states that John was known to be carrying letters that were derogatory to Islam, penned it seems in retaliation for offence caused by an earlier Andalusian embassy to the east Frankish court. As the delivery of such letters was likely to result in the death penalty for their carrier, various intermediaries struggled to persuade John to keep them to himself. He refused, apparently welcoming the chance to receive martyrdom for the faith and berating the local Christians for the laxity of their dealing with the Muslims.<sup>93</sup>



Frankish diplomacy thus facilitated ongoing contacts with the Christians of Córdoba well into the tenth century, although these contacts do not appear to have been particularly fruitful. John of Gorze, or at least his hagiographer, seems to have been closer in his views of Christian–Muslim relations to the apologists of the 850s than to those of the Christians with whom he interacted in the city.

For the apologists of the 850s, however, the most important contact with the Christians of northern Iberia was a journey that Eulogius made to Pamplona and the surrounding region, possibly in 848, and from which he brought back a number of Classical Latin works not extant in Córdoba.<sup>94</sup>

Eulogius apparently travelled there after political instability had prevented him from visiting his two brothers, who had been banished from al-Andalus.<sup>95</sup>

When it became clear that the route to Francia was blocked, Eulogius visited various monasteries in the region, had texts that were not available in Córdoba, including the *Istoria de Mahomet*, copied and eventually brought them back home with him.<sup>96</sup>

Albarus presented Eulogius's journey to the north as a turning point for those Christians who lamented the loss of Latin learning among their community, particularly for the study of poetry. However, the language situation in ninth-century Córdoba was extremely complex and research has revealed that Albarus was largely dealing in rhetoric rather than reality in his description of Eulogius's journey and its impact.<sup>97</sup>

As we have just seen, Eulogius's journey north was by no means as unusual as one might at first assume. Frankish monks travelled to Iberia on relic-hunting missions and accounts of their journeys

were subsequently written up and circulated widely, while relics and texts moved north and south within Iberia.<sup>98</sup>

The texts that Eulogius is described as having brought back from the north were cited far less frequently, however, than other works that, presumably, were already available in Córdoba. Historical writings by Isidore, for example, were readily available in Córdoba before Eulogius went north and continued to be used after he returned.<sup>99</sup>

There was not, despite what Albarus might have wanted us to believe, a renovation of the entirety of Christian culture.<sup>100</sup>

Christian intellectual life in Córdoba was in relatively good health before Eulogius went north and his efforts may have helped to provide additional resources to reinvigorate the poetry curriculum.<sup>101</sup>

However, Albarus's depiction of contact between northern and southern Iberia as of primary importance to the revival of Christian identity in mid-ninth-century Córdoba is thus partial and should be viewed as a rhetorical construct designed to position Eulogius at the intellectual heart of the Christian community.

More important for the purposes of this article is Eulogius's use of relics to promote connections between Córdoba's Christians and their co-religionists in northern Iberia and beyond. As we saw above in the case of the Frankish monks who visited Valencia and then Córdoba while searching for relics, the remains of martyrs connected the city to international religious and political networks. This episode can be compared to the letter that Louis the Pious sent to the citizens of Mérida (probably in 830) to encourage them in their revolt against the Cordoban emir 'Abd al-Raḥmān II and to offer them an alliance. It is noteworthy that the letter stresses the oppression that the people of

Mérida had experienced due to the cruelty of the emir: “We have heard of your distress and the various difficulties which you are suffering due to the cruelty of king ‘Abd al-Raḥmān” [Audivimus tribulationem vestram et multimodas angustias, quas patimini per crudelitatem regis Abdirahman].<sup>102</sup>

The rhetoric of suffering at the hands of an unjust ruler could thus be used in Frankish efforts to project their imperial authority into Iberia, although the practicality of Louis's proposed military alliance has rightly been questioned.<sup>103</sup>

Similar tropes of suffering and unjust oppression were, as we have seen, deployed by Albarus and Eulogius in Córdoba just over twenty years later.

The material remains of martyrs held a divine as well as a rhetorical charge and Eulogius was acutely aware of the potential of Cordoban relics to generate connections with outsiders. In a letter to Bishop Wiliesindus of Pamplona of 851, whom he thanked for hosting his trip to the north, Eulogius promised some relics of Zoilus and Acisclus. He hoped that this would contribute to the establishment of a cult in the north and mentioned Wiliesindus's votive promise to construct a basilica to Acisclus to ensure the intercession of God and the protection of the saints.<sup>104</sup>

Eulogius and Albarus thus hoped to achieve far more than to memorialise their martyrs in literary form. Relics of the martyrs were collected, interred in locations that were closely associated with earlier martyrs from Córdoba, and actively venerated. The relics, from the Roman martyrs Acisclus and Zoilus to the remains of members of the movement itself, were used to tie the Christian community of Córdoba, or at least its militant wing, into international networks of spiritual exchange with ecclesiastical authorities from northern Iberia and Francia. The relics enabled Eulogius and Albarus to call in aid from outside Córdoba and the basilicas provided a venue for the training of rigorist Christians and a focus for intercessory prayer.<sup>105</sup>

The apologetic evidence suggests that the remains of the martyrs were cherished and efforts were made to integrate them into the existing ecclesiastical infrastructure of Córdoba. However, their fame spread to the Christian territories of northern Iberia and the relics of the martyrs of the 850 soon began to be transferred northwards and the passions of some (but by no means all) of the Córdoba martyrs began to be collected in monasteries there.<sup>106</sup>

In the decades that followed the end of the martyr movement, during the reign of Alfonso III of the Asturias (d. 910), relics of Nunilo and Alodia were taken to Leire, one of the monasteries Eulogius had visited on his journey north, while in 884 Eulogius's own remains, along with those of the martyr Leocritia, were translated to Oviedo by the priest Dulcidius.<sup>107</sup>

Whatever value they continued to hold for the Christian community in Córdoba, the relics were more important for the role that they could play in facilitating diplomatic relations between Muḥammad I and Alfonso III, suggesting that in the north they were deemed an extremely worthy object of exchange.<sup>108</sup>

However, rather than drawing northern Christian intervention southwards, as perhaps Eulogius had hoped, northern Christian communities took possession of the relics, in the process harnessing the spiritual power of martyrs who had suffered for the faith in the south.

## Conclusion

In the 850s in Córdoba there developed a particularly strong disagreement within the leadership of the Christian community about its stance towards the Islamic authorities and Arab-Muslim culture. Some members of the Christian community, a group we might term “rigorists”, including Eulogius, Albarus and the martyrs, felt that any degree of cultural assimilation or compromise with Islamic culture would lead to religious integration, and the weakening of Christian identity and the Church as a whole. The other group, who most scholars have, for the last century at least, viewed as a “silent majority”, seem to have thought that it was possible for Christians and Muslims to coexist on a pragmatic level.<sup>109</sup>

Although we are almost entirely reliant on the highly partial evidence of Eulogius, Albarus and Samson to reconstruct the workings of the Christian community in mid-ninth-century Córdoba, their polemical arguments do seem to have convinced some of the Christian population – in the 850s at least – that there was no alternative to martyrdom as a way of protecting their faith from Islamic influence.

Martyrdom was a means of connecting Córdoba of the mid-ninth century with its Christian past in literary, physical and spiritual forms. This article has argued that this was not only because the martyrs were remembered in a wide range of texts as defenders of the Church against persecution, but also because the memories of earlier martyrs, particularly those who had died in Córdoba itself, were maintained there under Muslim rule just as they had been under the Christian Visigoths. The martyrs, or at least the apologists on whom we must rely for evidence, were acutely aware of the martyrial past of their religion and their city. They deployed and developed martyr memories to renew the Christian community, to connect it to other churches in Iberia and beyond, and to secure divine intervention in their disputes with other Christians in Córdoba and in their efforts to overcome Muslim “persecution” on the spiritual, if not the earthly, plane.

Like the martyrs of the early Church, the Cordoban martyrs of the 850s, as presented by their apologists, lived under a secular power that they considered to be oppressive. The sources are extremely one-sided and I make no claims that they represent anything approaching a “mainstream” Christian view. They do, however, point towards the role of the pre-existing martyrial environment in the formation and commemoration of the “movement”. This environment was both imaginative, as can be seen through the production, circulation and consumption of martyr stories, and physical, as the martyrs lived in a landscape that, although dominated politically by Muslim authority, retained at least part of the late Roman and Visigothic ecclesiastical infrastructure. The suburbs of Córdoba contained a number of basilicas dedicated to martyrs. The martyrs were venerated in these basilicas and, in the build-up to the events of the 850s, some members of a new cohort of martyrs

were trained in them. The burial and veneration of the bodies of the martyrial cohort of the 850s served to recharge the spiritual batteries of these basilicas and, Eulogius and Albarus hoped, the Christian community as a whole. Whether or not the martyr basilicas played as prominent a role in the training of the martyrs and the events of the 850s as the apologists suggest, their focus on these sites forms part of the same backward-looking project of renewal as Eulogius's discovery of a range of texts in the Christian north served for the rebirth of Latin learning in Córdoba. Whether a literary construction or one built from bricks and mortar, the power of these memorials of mid-ninth-century Córdoba derived from the blood of the martyrs, both past and present.

#### Notes.

1For a survey of sources that mention Acisclus, see C. García Rodríguez, *El culto de los santos en España romana y visigoda* (Madrid: Consejo de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto Enrique Flórez, 1966), pp. 220–5.

2Isidore of Seville, *Historia Gothorum*, second redaction 45, ed. C. Rodríguez Alonso, in *Las historias de los godos, vándalos y suevos de Isidoro de Sevilla* [Fuentes y Estudios de Historia Leonesa, volume XIII] (Léon: Centro de Estudios e Investigación San Isidoro, 1975), pp. 246–8; trans. K.B. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 2nd ed. [Translated Texts for Historians, volume IX] (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), p. 99.

3Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 12, ed. Juan Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, volumes I–II (Madrid: Instituto Antonio de Nebrija, 1973), I: 337; trans. C.M. Sage, *Paul Albarus of Córdoba: Studies in His Life and Writings* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1943), p. 201.

4For a brief overview of the martyr movement, see Roger Collins, *Early Medieval Spain: Unity in Diversity, 400–1000* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1995), pp. 213–19.

5Jessica A. Coope, *The Martyrs of Córdoba: Community and Family Conflict in an Age of Mass Conversion* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), p. xvi.

6Albarus, *Vita Eulogii*, 13–15, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 337–40, trans. Sage, Paul Albarus, 202–6.

7A. Cabaniss, “Paulus Albarus of Muslim Córdoba”, *Church History* 22 (1953): 99–112.

8On the representativeness of the martyrs and their apologists, see F.R. Franke, “Die freiwilligen Märtyr von Cordova und das Verhältnis der Mozaraber zum Islam”, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kulturgeschichte Spaniens* 13 (1958): 1–176; E.P. Colbert, *The Martyrs of Córdoba (850–859): A Study of the Sources* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1962).

9For sociological and anthropological approaches, especially on the issue of conversion rates, see R. Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period* (London: Harvard University Press, 1979); Jessica A. Coope, “Religious and Cultural Conversion to Islam in Ninth-Century Umayyad Córdoba”, *Journal of World History* 4 (1993): 47–68; Coope, *Martyrs of Córdoba*; Alwyn Harrison, “Behind the Curve: Bulliet and Conversion to Islam in al-Andalus Revisited”, *Al-Masāq: Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean* 24 (2012): 35–51; Janina M. Safran, *Defining Boundaries in Al-Andalus: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Islamic Iberia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), pp. 91–2.

10For a summary of recent research, see Cyrille Aillet, *Les Mozarabes : christianisme, islamisation et arabisation en péninsule ibérique (ixe– xiiesiècle)* [Bibliothèque de la Casa de Velázquez, volume XLV] (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2010) and the studies collected in *¿Existe una identidad mozárabe?: historia, lengua y cultura de los cristianos de al-Andalus (siglos IX-XII)*, ed. Cyrille Aillet, Mayte Penelas and Philippe Roisse [Collection de la Casa de Velázquez, volume CI] (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2008). See also Charles L. Tieszen, *Christian Identity amid Islam in Medieval Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 21–144.

11The classic work on this topic is Dominique Millet-Gérard, *Chrétiens mozarabes et culture islamique dans l'Espagne des VIIIe–IXe siècles* (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1984). More recently, see Fernando González Muñoz, “El conocimiento del Corán entre los mozárabes del siglo IX”, in *Sub luce florentis calami: homenaje a Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz*, ed. Manuela Domínguez García (Santiago Compostela: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 2002), pp. 390–409.

12Adriano Duque, “Claiming Martyrdom in the Episode of the Martyrs of Córdoba”, *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 8 (2011): 23–48.

13Ann Christys, *Christians in Al-Andalus (711–1000)* (Richmond: Curzon, 2002), pp. 52–79.

14Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 163–5, 174, 182–4; Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (London: Routledge, 1995), esp. pp. 200–14.

15See recently Gillian Clark, “Women and Asceticism in Late Antiquity: The Refusal of Status and Gender”, in *Asceticism*, ed. Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 33–49, esp. 43–4; Jane McLarty, “The Function of the Letter Form in Christian Martyrdom Accounts”, in *Epistolary Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*, ed. Owen Hodkinson, Patricia A. Rosenmeyer and Evelien Bracke [Mnemosyne supplements. Monographs on Greek and Latin Language and Literature, volume CCCLIX] (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 371–85; R.W. Burgess and Michael Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time: The Latin Chronicle Traditions from the First Century BC to the Sixth Century AD. Volume I: A Historical Introduction to the Chronicle Genre from Its Origins to the High Middle Ages* [Studies in the Early Middle Ages, volume XXXIII] (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), pp. 49, 176; Patrick Geary, “Chronicles, Annals, and Other Forms of Memoria”, in *Chronicon. Medieval Narrative Sources: A Chronological Guide with Introductory Essays*, ed. János M. Bak and Ivan Jurković [Brepols Essays in European Culture, volume V] (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), p. 21.

16Éric Rebillard, *Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200-450 CE* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 2012), pp. 43–6, 50, 60.

17Brent Shaw, *Sacred Violence. African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 587.

18Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982). On civic/episcopal competition specifically, see Filippo Carlà, “Milan, Ravenna, Rome: Some Reflections on the Cult of the Saints and on Civic Politics in Late Antique Italy”, *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa* 46 (2010): 197–272.

19The classic study is García Rodríguez, *El culto de los santos*; more recently, see P. Castillo Maldonado, “Angelorum Participes: The Cult of the Saints in Late Antique Spain”, in *Hispania in Late Antiquity: Current Perspectives*, ed. K. Bowes and M. Kulikowski (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 151–88.

20Jacques Fontaine, “King Sisebut's *Vita Desiderii* and the Political Function of Visigothic Hagiography”, in *Visigothic Spain: New Approaches*, ed. Edward James (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980),



pp. 93–129; Roger Collins, “Mérida and Toldeo: 550–585”, in *Visigothic Spain: New Approaches*, ed. Edward James (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980), pp. 189–222; E.D. Hunt, “St Stephen in Minorca: An Episode in Jewish-Christian Relations in the Early Fifth Century A.D.”, *Journal of Theological Studies* 33 (1982): 106–23.

21Castillo Maldonado, “*Angelorum Participes*”, 153–4, 187–8.

22Isabel Sánchez Ramos, “La cristianización de las necrópolis de Córdoba: fuentes escritas y testimonios arqueológicos”, *Archivo Español de Arqueología* 80 (2007): 191–206; Purificación Ubrić Rabaneda, *La iglesia en la Hispania del siglo V* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2004), pp. 158–9.

23Mark A. Handley, *Death, Society and Culture: Inscriptions and Epitaphs in Gaul and Spain, AD 300–750* [BAR International Series, volume MCXXXV] (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2003), p. 151.

24Prudentius, *Peristephanon*, IV.19–20, ed. and trans. H.J. Thomson [Loeb Classical Library], volumes I–II (London: Heinemann, 1949–1953), I: 156–7; Thomson suggests that the three other martyrs – the “three crowns” – were Faustus, Januarius and Martialis. For Prudentius on Spain and his depiction of Spanish martyrs in general, see Michael J. Roberts, *Poetry and the Cult of the Martyrs: The Liber Peristephanon of Prudentius* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), pp. 3–5, 9–11, 35–6, 131–2. For a survey of the main Cordoban saints, see García Rodríguez, *El culto de los santos*, 220–5 (Acisclus); 225–7 (Faustus, Januarius and Martialis); 228–31 (Zoilus).

25Ubrić Rabaneda, *La iglesia*, 138; Jean-Pierre Molénat, “La place des chrétiens dans la Cordoue des Omeyyades, d’après leurs églises (VIII–Xe siècles)”, *Al-Qantara* 33 (2012): 147–68.

26Michael Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and Its Cities* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), p. 289; for Acisclus as patron saint, see Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*, 143.

27Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*, 136, argues that the use of aera dating on inscriptions at the church of St Acisclus was intended as a marker of Catholic identity in opposition to that of the Arian Goths.

28Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 411–12, n. 8.

29David James, *A History of Early Al-Andalus. The Akhbār majmū'a: A Study of the Unique Arabic Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris* (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 52.

30Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda, ed J. Vives (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto Enrique Flórez, 1969), nos 304, 307, 316a, 316b, 326; Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*, 149–51.

31Inscripciones cristianas, nos 324, 313; Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*, 151.

32Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*, 255.

33The discovery of the relics is recorded in *Passio Zoili* 7, in *Pasionario Hispánico: Introducción, edición crítica y traducción*, ed. P. Riesco Chueca (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1995), pp. 247–9 (on the date, see n. 1, p. 245); Castillo Maldonado, “*Angelorum Participes*”, 166, 168.

34*Passio Zoili* 6–7, in *Pasionario Hispánico*, 246–8; Castillo Maldonado, “*Angelorum Participes*”, 182–3.

35See García Rodríguez, *El culto de los santos*, 219–31, for an overview of liturgical evidence for each Cordoban saint.

36See Castillo Maldonado, “*Angelorum Participes*”, 167, for the literary inventio (away from Córdoba to judge from the sources) of Victoria, a supposed companion of Acisclus, which is modelled on the foreign martyr Cristina.

37*Passio Ascilscli et Victoriae* and *Passio Fausti Ianuarii et Martialis*, in *Pasionario Hispánico: Introducción, edición crítica y traducción*, ed. P. Riesco Chueca (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1995), pp. 4–16 and 192–8.

38Oracional visigótico 36, ed. J. Vives [*Monumenta Hispaniæ Sacra*, serie litúrgica, volume I] (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1946), p. 14; Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, “La fecha de implantación festivo visigótico”, *Boletín Arqueológico* 113–20 (1971): 215–43; Handley, *Death, Society and Culture*, 152–3.

39Walafrid Strabo, *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum* 29, ed. and trans. Alice L. Harting-Correa, *Walahfrid Strabo's Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum: A Translation and Liturgical Commentary* [Mittellateinische Studien und Texte, volume IXX] (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p. 186. Interestingly, one of Walafrid's poems was sent to Bodo, a sub-deacon who later converted to Judaism and found his way to Córdoba, where he engaged polemical exchanges with Albarus. A. Cabaniss, "Bodo-Eleazar: A Famous Jewish Convert", *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, New Series 43/4 (1953): 313–28, pp. 315–19.

40M<sup>a</sup> Jesús Aldana García and Pedro Herrera Roldan, "Prudencio entre los mozárabes cordobeses: algunos testimonios", *Latomus* 56 (1997): 765–83, p. 766.

41Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 11, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 336.

42Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.24, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, II: 389; see II: 739–42 for a list of the non-Cordoban martyrs referenced by Eulogius.

43Roberts, *Poetry and the Cult of the Martyrs*, 3–5, 9–11, 35–6, 131–2. For a similar process of competitive inter-city commemoration through biography, see Jamie Wood, "Playing the Fame Game: Bibliography, Celebrity and Primacy in Late Antique Spain", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 20 (2012): 613–40.

44Albar reports that, when interviewed by the judge about why he had been harbouring a Christian girl called Leocritia at his house, Eulogius stated that it was his priestly duty to provide religious instruction by preaching to those who wanted to improve their knowledge of the faith. Albar, *Vita Eulogii* 15, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 339; Richard Hitchcock, *Mozarabs in Medieval and Early Modern Spain: Identities and Influences* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008), p. 35. On martyrs as teachers and preachers, see Erin Ronsse, "Rhetoric of Martyrs: Listening to Saints Perpetua and Felicitas", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 14 (2006): 283–327.

45Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 11, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 336; trans. Sage, Paul Albarus, 201.

46Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 4-5, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 332–3, trans. Sage, Paul Albarus, 194–5.

47For the fundamental study of this text, see: M.C. Díaz y Díaz, “Los textos antimahometanos más antiguos en códices españoles”, *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 45 (1970): 149–64. See also: J. Moorhead, “The Earliest Christian Theological Response to Islam”, *Religion* 11 (1981): 265–74; K.B. Wolf, “The Earliest Spanish Christian Views of Islam”, *Church History* 55 (1986): 281–93.

48Janna Wasilewski, “The ‘Life of Muhammad’ in Eulogius of Córdoba: Some Evidence for the Transmission of Greek Polemic to the Latin west”, *Early Medieval Europe* 16 (2008): 333–53.

49Eulogius, *Liber apologeticus martyrum* 16, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, II: 483–6, where the text is described as a *historiola*.

50Christys, *Christians in Al-Andalus*, 52–79, pp. 78–9.

51Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, 218.

52Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 17, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 341; trans. Sage, Paul Albarus, 210.

53Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 10, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 336; trans. adapted from Sage, Paul Albarus, 200–1. On the date of Eulogius election as bishop of Toledo, see K.B. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 46.

54Coope, *Martyrs of Córdoba*, 71–3.

55See Maureen A. Tilley, “The Ascetic Body and the (Un)Making of the World of the Martyr”, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59 (1991): 467–79. An interesting recent study is Johan Leemans, “Martyr, Monk and Victor of Paganism: An Analysis of Basil of Caesarea's Panegyric Sermon on Gordius”, in *More Than a Memory: The Discourse of Martyrdom and the Construction of Christian Identity in the History of Christianity*, ed. Johan Leemans [Annua Nuntia Lovaniensia,

volume LI] (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), pp. 45–80. See Safran, *Defining Boundaries*, 92–3 for the use of hagiographical conventions by the apologists in the 850s.

56Aldana García and Herrera Roldan, “Prudencio entre los mozárabes cordobeses”, 768–70.

57Aldana García and Herrera Roldan, “Prudencio entre los mozárabes cordobeses”, 770–4.

58Aldana García and Herrera Roldan, “Prudencio entre los mozárabes cordobeses”, 774–6 (defiance); 776–7 (entry into the prison); 777–9 (punishment), 779–80 (death); 780–2 (crown); 782 (opponents).

59Joyce E. Salisbury, *Blood of Martyrs: Unintended Consequences of Ancient Violence* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 104–13.

60See *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, ed. Gil, II: 742–8 for Biblical references in the writings of the apologists; James Waltz, “The Significance of the Voluntary Martyrs of Ninth-Century Córdoba”, *Muslim World* 60 (1970): 143–59, pp. 143–4.

61Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 1, Praefatio 3, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, II: 368; Hitchcock, *Mozarabs in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, 30.

62K.B. Wolf, “Christian Views of Islam in Early Medieval Spain”, in *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays*, ed. John Victor Tolan (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 85–108, esp. 93–102.

63We should be wary of overstating the degree of Islamicisation of the cities of Al-Andalus, however, because even in Córdoba Muslims, Christians and Jews continued to occupy a common urban space; see Safran, *Defining Boundaries*, 83; on urban transition more generally, see *ibid.*, 82–90; and John Edwards, “The Changing Use of Worship in Roman and Medieval Córdoba”, in *Destruction and Conservation of Cultural Property*, ed. Robert Layton, Peter G. Stone and Julian Thomas (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 224–31. On variations in burial practices and what they may indicate about inter-communal relations, see Ann Christys, “Communities of the Dead in Umayyad Córdoba”, *Al-Masāq: Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean* 21 (2009): 289–99.

64Edwards, "Changing Use of Worship", 227–9.

65Safran, *Defining Boundaries*, 98.

66Molénat, "La place des chrétiens", 147–68.

67Ibid., 159–63.

68Julian González Fernández, "Mozarabía Versus Islam: ¿Convivencia o Intransigencia?", *Cuadernos del Cemyr* 10 (2002): 27–42, pp. 33–4.

69Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, 65; Coope, *Martyrs of Córdoba*, 20–2, 27–8, 32, 39–40, 54–7, 60, 71–2.

70Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.10.34, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 430; Coope, *Martyrs of Córdoba*, 57.

71On disposal of bodies by Muslim authorities, see, for example, Eulogius, *Liber apologeticus martyrum* 30; Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 1, *Praefatio* 3, 2.2, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 492; II: 368, 402.

72Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.5, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 404.

73Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 3.8.1, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 445.

74Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.12, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 431.

75Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.8.12, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 413.

76See *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, ed. Gil, II: 720–2 for a full list of the monasteries and basilicas mentioned in the works of the apologists and their relationships to the martyrs, as sites of education and burial.

77Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 5, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, I: 333.

78Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.10.34, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 430.

79Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.9, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 415.

80Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.8.15, 2.1, 2.5, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 415, 400, 404–5.

81Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 15–16; Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 2.11, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, I: 341; II: 431.

82Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 3.16, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 456.

83Coope, *Martyrs of Córdoba*, 72.

84Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 5, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, I: 333; trans. Sage, Paul Albarus, 196.

85Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 19, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, I: 342–3.

86Albarus, *Vita Eulogii* 18, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, I: 341; trans. Sage, Paul Albarus, 210–11; later in the same chapter Albarus asks Eulogius to grant him “worthy mediation” (*interuenientibus dignis*).

87Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum*, *Praefatio* 1, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 366–7.

88Eulogius, Epistula 3.11, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 501.

89Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* 3.8.1, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 445.

90Abdurrahman A. El-Hajji, "Andalusian Diplomatic Relations with the Franks during the Umayyad Period", *Islamic Studies* 30 (1991): 241–62. Frankish chronicles often report events in Iberia, including diplomatic contacts between the emirs of Córdoba and Francia; see J. Nelson, "The Franks, the Martyrology of Usuard and the Martyrs of Córdoba", in *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, ed. D. Wood [Studies in Church History, volume XXX] (Oxford: Ecclesiastical History Society, 1993), pp. 67–80.

91Frank Reiss, "From Aachen to Al-Andalus: The Journey of Deacon Bodo (823-876)", *Early Medieval Europe* 13 (2005): 131–57; Cabaniss, "Bodo-Eleazar".

92The journey and translation of the relics is recorded in the ninth-century account of Aimoin of St-Germain des-Prés, *De Translatione SS. Matryrum Georgii Monachi, Aurelii et Nathaliae* [Patrologia Latina, volume CXV] (Paris: Migne, 1852), cols 939–60A; Nelson, "The Franks", 71–80; Ann Christys, "St-Germain des-Prés, St Vincent and the Martyrs of Cordoba", *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998): 199–216.

93Vita Johannis Gorzensis, ed. G.H. Pertz [Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores, volume IV] (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1841), pp. 335–77; Roger Collins, *Caliphs and Kings: Spain, 796–1031* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp. 83–4.

94On the date see: Roger Collins, "Poetry in Ninth-Century Spain", *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar* 4 (1983): 181–95.

95Eulogius, Epistula 3.1, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 497–8; Nelson, "The Franks", 73; Collins, "Poetry in Ninth-Century Spain", 181.

96Eulogius, Epistula 3; Albarus, Vita Eulogii 9, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabiorum*, II: 497–503; I: 335–6. The key study of the complex transmission of Visigothic manuscripts to the south of Spain is Manuel Cecilio Díaz Díaz, *Manuscritos visigóticos del sur de la península: ensayo de distribución regional* [Historia y Geografía, volume XI] (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1995).



97Albarus, *Vita Eulogii*, 4, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 333. Nuanced reinterpretations of the evidence that unpick the extremely complex language situation in ninth-century Córdoba are offered by the following: Pedro Herrera Roldan, *Cultura y lengua latinas entre los mozárabes cordobeses del siglo IX* (Córdoba: Universidad de Córdoba, 1995); David Wasserstein, "The Language Situation in al-Andalus", in *Studies on the Muwašṣaḥ and Kharja*, ed. A. Jones and R. Hitchcock (Reading: Ithaca, 1991), pp. 1–15; Roger Wright, "La inteligibilidad pan-romance en el siglo IX: Eulogio de Córdoba y los Juramentos de Estrasburgo", in *Estudios de historia de la lengua española en América y España*, ed. Aleza Izquierdo Milagros (Valencia: University of Valencia, 1999), pp. 273–85; Roger Wright, "Language and Religion in Early Medieval Spain", in *Language of Religion – Language of the People*, ed. Michael Richter and David Wasserstein (Munich: Fink, 2006), pp. 115–26.

98Nelson, "The Franks", 73–4, 79.

99On copying and citation of Isidore, see Rodrigo Furtado, "Isidore's Histories in the Mozarabic Scholarship of the Eighth and Early Ninth Centuries", in *Ways of Approaching Knowledge in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages: Schools and Scholarship*, ed. Paulo Farmhouse Alberto and David Paniagua [*Studia Classica et Mediaevalia*, volume VIII] (Nordhausen: Traugott Bautz, 2012), pp. 264–87, esp. 284; Feliciano Delgado, "Alvaro de Córdoba", in *Actas del I Congreso Nacional de Cultura Mozárabe: historia, arte, literatura, liturgia y música, Córdoba, 27 al 30 de abril de 1995* (Córdoba: Publicaciones Obra Social y Cultural CajaSur, 1996), pp. 73–88, esp. 76; Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, 216.

100David J. Wasserstein, "A Latin Lament on the Prevalence of Arabic in Ninth-Century Islamic Cordoba," in *Arabicus Felix: Luminosus Brittanicus. Essays in Honour of A.F.L. Beeston on His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Alan Jones (Reading: Ithaca Press and Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, 1991), pp. 1–7.

101For the Latin poems that were produced by the apologists, see Albarus, *Carmina*, and Samson, *Carmina*, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 344–61; II: 665.

102Einhard, *Epistola* 12, ed. K. Hampe [*Monumenta Germaniae Historica Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, volume III] (Berlin: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1899), pp. 115–16 (my translation).

103For most recent study of this letter, see Jonathan Conant, "Louis the Pious and the Contours of Empire", *Early Medieval Europe* 22 (2014): 336–360, p. 338 for projection of imperial authority.

104Eulogius, *Epistula* 3.5; 3.9, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, II: 499–500; Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, 55.

105Albarus, for example, reports that Eulogius spent sleepless nights in the basilica of San Zoilus beseeching God to give strength to Leocritia, *Vita Eulogii* 13, ed. Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, I: 338.

106Christys, *Christians in Al-Andalus*, 80–107, 125.

107Bonnie Effros, "Usuard's Journey to Spain and Its Influence on the Dissemination of the Cult of the Cordovan Martyrs", *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21 (1990): 21–37, p. 31; Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, 220–1, 252; for more on the translation of Nunilo and Alodia, see Christys, *Christians in Al-Andalus*, 68–78.

108Collins, *Caliphs and Kings*, 108.

109Colbert, *Martyrs of Córdoba*, 90.